

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM

SUBJ: NGO CONFERENCE ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN THE
AMERICAS -- VANDEN HEUVEL MEETING WITH IROQUOIS NATION

REF: A) GASTON-SHAPIO/HEWITT TELCON 9/23, (B) STATE 228285

1. AMBASSADOR VANDEN HEUVEL EXTENDED TO CHIEFS OF IROQUOIS NATION, AND TO OTHER INDIAN DELEGATES OF THEIR CHOOSING AN INVITATION TO JOIN HIM AT HIS RESIDENCE FOR COFFEE ON THE AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 23. ALTHOUGH MEETING WAS DELAYED TWO HOURS DUE TO LENGTHY IROQUOIS PRAYER SERVICE, WHEN GROUP FINALLY ARRIVED AT RESIDENCE AND DISCUSSION WAS INITIATED, SESSION PROVED MOST INSTRUCTIVE.

2. SPOKESMAN FOR THE GROUP, CHIEF OREN LYONS, OPENED CONVERSATION BY DRAWING UP BOUNDARIES OF IROQUOIS NATION (A LARGE PART OF NEW YORK STATE). HE WENT ON TO CITE TREATIES WHICH HIS NATION AND THE U.S. HAD NEGOTIATED IN THE PAST AND WHICH THE IROQUOIS FEEL THE U.S. HAS ABROGATED. LYONS NOTED THAT THE GOOD RELATIONS WHICH EXISTED IN THE PAST HAVE BEEN ERODED (FOR INSTANCE, HE POINTED OUT THAT AS A NATION THE IROQUOIS HAD ALWAYS BEEN INVITED TO

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PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATIONS BUT THE PRACTICE WAS ENDED BY THE U.S. WITHOUT EXPLANATION). AT ISSUE, HE STATED, IS THE FACT THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS NOT LISTENING TO THE INDIANS. LYONS SAID THAT IT WAS "A SHAME" THAT INDIANS HAD TO COME TO GENEVA IN ORDER TO BE HEARD AND TO MOVE TOWARD REDRESSING THEIR GRIEVANCES. HE REJECTED THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION REPORT ON INDIANS BECAUSE THE

INDIANS PARTICIPATING IN THE EXERCISE WERE NOT INDIVIDUALS CHOSES BY THE INDIANS BUT BY THE "WHITE MEN". HE STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE IROQUOIS WISHED TO DISCUSS SOME OF THEIR PROBLEMS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION. DURING THE COURSE OF THE CONVERSATION HE NOTED THAT A LETTER SENT TO THE PRESIDENT IN JANUARY, REQUESTING A MEETING, HAD NOT BEEN ANSWERED.

3. TURNING TO THE ISSUE OF THEIR PASSPORTS, LYONS EXPLAINED THAT THEY WERE REGISTERED IN THE IROQUOIS RECORDS CENTER, AN EXTENSIVE OPERATION LOCATED IN UP-STATE NEW YORK. HE ALSO NOTED THAT THESE PASSPORTS HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT WHEN MEMBERS OF THE IROQUOIS NATION TRAVELED TO THAT COUNTRY. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT DOCUMENTS WOULD BE SATISFACTORY FOR RE-ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES.

4. COMMENT: MISSION BELIEVES PROBABLY THE ONLY POSITIVE GAIN FOR U.S. FROM PARTICIPATION IN NGO CONFERENCE WAS THIS MEETING WITH INDIAN DELEGATES. MISSION HAS LEARNED THAT MOST INDIANS (EVEN THOSE ELECTING NOT TO COME) HERE PLEASED THAT EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER ARRANGING A FOLLOW-ON MEETING WITH ABOVE GROUP PRIOR TO BELGRADE CONFERENCE. WHILE SUCH A SESSION COULD NOT RESOLVE INDIAN PROBLEMS, IT MIGHT SERVE TO SATISFY TO SOME DEGREE THE EXPRESSED NEED FOR CONSULTATION WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ADMINISTRATION AND, TO THAT EXTENT, PALLIATE ANY ATTACKS PLANNED FOR BELGRADE. END COMMENT. VANDEN HEUVEL

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